

THE

No 9

MORMON DOCTRINE

OF

POLYGAMY,

OR

PLURALITY OF WIVES,

EXAMINED AND REFUTED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PLAIN QUESTIONS FOR MORMONITES," AND PRIZE
ESSAY, "THE CHURCH OF ROME OPPOSED TO THE HOLY BIBLE AND
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH."

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them."—*Ephesians* v. 3, 6.

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MORMON DOCTRINE OF POLYGAMY, &c.

COMMON intelligence must at once perceive, and every Christian has not failed to discover, in the "Spiritual Wife" doctrine of the Mormons, the very worst principles of licentiousness, adultery, and fornication. Nor can any man who has studied them, and whose heart is right, fail to denounce and expose a system, the principles of which are so inimical to social order, and destructive of female virtue and peace. Persons whose especial duty it has been to make these serious charges, have been termed "false accusers, blind, ignorant Gentiles, who, like unbelievers of old, laid to the charge of the people of God, things that they knew not." The very existence of such a doctrine as polygamy in Mormon theology was utterly disowned, and unequivocally denied, by every leader and member of that sect; while, at the *same time*, it was being *practised* amongst them, to the fullest extent, whenever and wherever they could secure female dupes. These barefaced denials were unblushingly made up to so late a period as the end of 1852, when concealment or denial was no longer possible; their iniquitous practices having grown to such a fearful height, (more especially at the Salt Lake, where the principles of Mormonism have been fully developed,) that a totally different line of conduct became necessary; and some justification for the practice was demanded. Then came out a public acknowledgment of both the doctrine and the practice, in a so-called "Revelation" upon the subject, said to have been "given to

Joseph Smith, Nauvoo, July 12th, 1843," and which appeared in print on January 1st, 1853, in the *Millennial Star*, No. 1, vol. xv. Thus, then, on their own showing, they have been guilty of the grossest prevarication and lying *for at least ten years past!* This alone clearly marks their origin (*John* viii. 44), and fully disproves their claim to the title of "saints." (*Eph.* iv. 15, 25; v. 1—3.)

This would-be-thought divine "revelation" is so contrary to the character of God, so repugnant to common sense, and so grovelling in its principles, that no further argument is needed to prove that it never came from Him. Its immorality is so glaring, its grammatical errors are so many, that it is evident it emanated from a being in no way remarkable either for his wisdom or his learning. Brigham Young, most probably, was its author—the Mormon god at the Salt Lake!

Whoever has read the Koran, will not fail to discover a striking resemblance between the "revelations," purporting to have been given by God to Mahomed in justification of his adulterous intercourse, and the "revelation" to Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, for the same purpose. (See *Simpson's Key to the Prophecies*, p. 264.)

Now, if polygamy was really conducive to domestic happiness and female virtue, doubtless God would have instituted, established, and ordered it at the Creation, when it seemed to be most needed. Instead of which, we are told that "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and He took *one* of his ribs, and the rib which He had taken from man, made He a *woman*." Observe! *not* women, but *woman*! and brought her unto the man. "Therefore," said He, "shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his *wife*: and they shall be one flesh." "And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit; and let none deal treacherously against the *wife* of his youth." (*Mal.* ii. 15.) Again we assert, that if

a plurality of wives had been agreeable to Jehovah's mind, will, and law, and necessary for man, He never would have delayed and deferred a "revelation" upon this subject until the year of our Lord ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND FORTY-THREE!

Even amongst Mormon leaders, there is an evident consciousness of the weakness and absurdity of this production. Hence the diligent search and feverish anxiety for Scripture proof and example, for imitation in the indulgence of unbridled lust. This obtained, as they suppose, to the satisfaction and confusion of every Christian, there appeared almost simultaneously with the "Revelation," a letter "by Elder Orson Spencer," entitled "Patriarchal Order, or Plurality of Wives," dated Liverpool, England, January 13th, 1853. Therein the writer viciously, blasphemously, and perversely reasons, that "polygamy is the only kind of marriage instituted by, and in accordance with the mind of, God." There is little doubt the writer of this infamous letter derived considerable assistance in his labour from a book entitled "Polygamia Triumphatrix," which makes Lamech its hero, and asserts that Scripture mentions his polygamy, in order "to recommend it!" Every careful reader of his Bible, however, will be aware that that holy book is not only an inspired record of Divine truth, but also an inspired record of national iniquity, personal ungodliness, patriarchal, prophetic, and apostolical *inconsistencies and sins!* There are many characters and actions of men recorded there, which it would not be proper to follow or imitate. In this respect, as in others, it is the "Book of books." It impartially marks down the evil and sinful, as well as good, actions of men—and of God's people among the rest—the good, for our imitation—the bad, for *our* warning, admonition, and learning, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Perfectly consistent with Mormon principles, Orson Spencer has selected the *incon-*

sistencies and sins of men for imitation, instead of their virtues and consistency ! Besides this, he commences the history of his so-called " Patriarchal Order of Plurality of Wives " with Abraham, Jacob, Elkanah, David, and Solomon. Did he forget that there were *many* other patriarchs *before* these men ; such as Enoch, whose example and holiness of life might have furnished ample materials for his " Letter," and would have been a beautiful model for imitation ; or had *his* bible lost the first fifteen chapters of Genesis, and thus deprived him of the opportunity of commencing his " Patriarchal " history earlier ?

Now, if this darling Mormon system of " plurality of wives " was so well pleasing to God at one time as he represents it, it would have been equally so at another. Let the reader consult the chronology of his Bible, and he will find that the institution of God—one man and *one* woman in marriage—continued uninterrupted for at least 235 years ; when Lamech became the *first* transgressor (*Gen.* iv. 19.) Passing from this chapter to the sixth, embracing a period of about 1656 years, the practice of polygamy had reached a fearful height, and had become almost universal. So great had the wickedness of men become under the influence of a carnal nature, that even " the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair ; and they took them wives of all which they chose. " (*Gen.* vi. 2.) Noah and his three sons, however, were an exception to the profligacy which generally prevailed at that time. And mark the honour which God put upon this family for their consistency, holiness, and steady adherence to the Divine law of marriage, and avoidance of the evil conduct and example of those around them. (*Gen.* vi. 8, 9. ; vii. 1, 7.) On the other hand, God's heavy judgment fell in a flood of waters upon all those who gave themselves up to the sinful indulgence of carnal lusts. " And all flesh died that moved upon the earth. " (*Gen.* vii. 21.)

Abraham's departure from the Divine rule is easily accounted for. The fallen nature of man ever produces the same bitter fruits; and, therefore, all the sins for which the world was drowned, afterwards broke forth again in all the wild luxuriance of an unregenerate heart.* And Abram had seen polygamy practised in the land of his nativity, and by the Canaanites amongst whom he afterwards dwelt. The adoption of such a system in his own family, however, brought its own bitter punishment. Sarah, in a moment of unbelief, suggested the evil course. (*Gen.* xvi. 1—3.) The consequences that followed were a righteous retribution for her impatience and unbelief (see *Gen.* xvi. 4—9; xxi. 9); and subsequently to the painful circumstances recorded here, a separation of the whole family was necessary. (*Gen.* xxv. 5, 6.) Jacob, too, suffered severely in his domestic circle from the very same cause (*Gen.* xxx. 14, 15; xxxvii.); Elkanah also (*1 Sam.* i. 1—7); and well would it have been for poor David and Solomon, if they had taken heed to the command of God, by his servant Moses, to the future kings of Israel, viz., that "he shall not multiply horses to himself"—"*neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away*" from the Lord his God. (*Deut.* xvii. 16, 17.) The following texts will show the sad consequences which followed a departure from this Divine command:—*2 Samuel* xii. 10; xiii. 28—36; xv. ; *1 Kings* xi. 1—14.

Joseph Smith's absurd "Revelation," and Orson Spencer's blasphemous "Letter," make the favour of God and eternal life to depend more upon the extent of a man's licentiousness, than upon the redemption by Christ, and

* The advocacy of such a doctrine, in the present day, gives a special force to the prophetic declaration of Jesus, when He foretold that the state of society in the last days would be as the days of Noah, given up to worldliness and fleshly lusts. (*Luke* xvii. 26—30.) And these Mormonites, or, as St. Jude names such characters, "these filthy dreamers, who defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities," are, unconsciously, accomplishing the fulfilment of this prophecy of our blessed Lord.

holiness of life! This daring imposter, with all the temerity imaginable, asserts that "God commanded Abraham to take Hagar to wife," and that "Abraham receiving concubines, it was counted unto him for righteousness (*Revelation Star*, No. 1, vol. xv., pp. 7, 8); whereas the Holy Ghost, by the pen of St. Paul and St. James, declares that it was *his faith* in the promises of God, which was imputed to him for righteousness. (*Romans* iv. 19—22; *James* ii. 23.) And a reference to *Genesis* xvi. will show that God gave *no command whatever* upon the subject either to the one or the other.

The mantle of the *lying prophet* having fallen upon the reckless Elder, he also reiterates the same *falsehood*, on page 8 of his Letter, and says that "God called upon Sarah to divide, or share, her husband with another!" We ask *when*, and *where* in the Bible can it be found? Again, on page 7, he teaches that the "everlasting covenant which God made with Abraham, was the law of polygamy." Read attentively the history of God's dealings with Abraham, from the fourteenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of *Genesis*, to the close of his life, in the twenty-fifth chapter, and *no such* covenant can be found! The only covenants God made with him were, first, in reference to the *land of Canaan* (*Gen.* xv. 18), and renewed in chapter xvii. Then follows the *covenant of Grace*—"that God would be a God unto him, and his seed after him." This was confirmed by the *covenant of Circumcision* (*Gen.* xvii.); and we defy all the Mormon-ites together to show any covenant of polygamy in Scripture of God with Abraham; and, if not found there, how dare they come with their absurd "Revelation" and blasphemous "Letter" to the contrary? thereby making God the author of their sin!

Now, with regard to the *seed* of Abraham, and the promises of God to them, the Bible makes *distinction*, where Mormons make confusion! Hear God himself: "My

covenant" (the covenant of grace, and in reference to a Saviour) "will I establish with Isaac." (*Gen.* xvii. 21.) "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." (xxi. 12.) And so writes the Apostle Paul. (*Gal.* iv. 21—31; iii. 16.) Here, then, God *excludes* what Mormons dare to include. God *rejects* the children of the flesh, the fruit of carnal indulgence. And yet these ignorant deceivers assert their full admission and participation in the covenant of promise, grace and mercy!

The anti-Christian character of Mormon polygamy may be seen in another light—by instituting a comparison between the teachings of the apostles of Mormonism and the Apostles of Jesus Christ. The former teach and glory in an unbridled sexual intercourse. To whatever extent this practice may be carried, the "Revelation" declares man does not commit sin! (*Star*, No. 1, vol. xv., p. 8.) The greater the extent of his crimes in this respect, the higher degree of glory in the world to come. See Orson Spencer's "Letter"—that if a man refuse to obey their doctrine of polygamy, he shall be eternally "*damned!*" (*Revelation Star*, No. 1, vol. xv., pp. 5, 6.)

Now read attentively the following texts of Holy Scripture:—*Romans* xiii. 13, 14; 1 *Thess.* iv. 1—5; *Col.* iii. 5; *Gal.* v. 24; 1 *Peter* ii. 11; *Gal.* v. 21; *Rev.* xxi. 7; and, as you read them, remember that precepts and doctrines so opposite, and *immorality* so degrading, could *not* proceed from the holy mind of the God of the Bible, but from the god of this world, the author of all evil and sin.

Space will not permit a further notice here of the *falsehoods*, *perversions* of Scripture, *blasphemy*, *absurdities*, *immorality*, and *nonsense*, put forth by Orson Spencer in his pernicious letter. It is enough to know that marriage, as instituted by God himself—the voice of Scripture—the history of the heathen world, and the sad state of Mormon society, are all against the practice advocated by this Elder. Firstly, marriage, as instituted by God himself, is

directly contrary to Mormon teaching. (*Gen.* ii. 22, 24.) That this law was to continue in perpetuity is clear; for Christ Jesus, in His day, recognised no other law of marriage than this. (See *Matt.* xix. 3, 9.) St. Paul also taught the very same doctrine: "Now, concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me; it is good for a man not to touch a woman; nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own *wife*." Observe, not plural, wives, but singular, "*wife*." And let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the *wife* due benevolence, and likewise the *wife* unto the husband. (1 *Cor.* vii. 2, 3.) See also 1 *Tim.* iii. 1, 2, 12, where we learn that polygamy would be a sufficient *disqualification* for the office of the ministry! although Orson Spencer has had so little regard to truth as to assert that which is opposite to the plain and manifest teaching of the Apostle himself.

Secondly—The voice of Scripture and inspiration are against the system. This is a striking fact; for whenever the divine institution of marriage is alluded to, it is always expressed in the *singular number*, except when a plural number of married persons are addressed, when, of course, the plural number is used; such, for example, as "Husbands love your wives"—"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands." (*Col.* iii. 18, 19.) Inspired allusions to marriage in Scripture, are invariably found expressed under three substantive nouns—thus, *Marriage*—*Bride*—*Wife*. A few examples must suffice here. Firstly, on *Marriage*, see *Gen.* xxxviii. 6—8; *Deut.* xxv. 5; *Isaiah* lxii. 5; *Luke* xiv. 20. Secondly, under the term *Bride*, see *Isaiah* lxi. 10; *Jer.* ii. 32; *Joel* ii. 16; *John* iii. 29; *Rev.* xxi. 2, 9, xxii. 17; *Matt.* ix. 15. Thirdly, *Wife*, see *Exodus* xx. 17; *Lev.* xxi. 13, 14; *Prov.* v. 18, xviii. 22; *Ecc.* ix. 9; *Mal.* ii. 14, 15; *Eph.* v. 23, 33; 1 *Cor.* vii. 2, 3. This fact in itself is the clearest proof possible that polygamy has *no place* in the mind and law of God.

But we are gravely told by another Mormon luminary, Elder John Jaques, in his letter, "that Moses taught the principle of polygamy to the children of Israel, and that the laws regulating it are amongst the statutes of the Lord delivered by Moses unto them;" and, for a proof of his assertion, he refers us to *Exodus* xxi., *Num.* xxxi., *Deut.* xx., xxi., xxv. (*Star*, Feb. 12, 1853, p. 102.) A careful examination of these passages will lead the reader to an *opposite conclusion* to that which this "gifted" elder has arrived at. No "command" can be found in them, and no "principle of polygamy taught by Moses," through them. It was a merciful legislation on the part of God to "regulate" the evils arising from the hardness and perversity of men's hearts, to prevent injustice and oppression in cases of betrothal of maid servants, lest the betrothal should not be consummated by marriage, and in regard to captives taken in war, who might become the wives of Israelitish soldiers; as also respecting the duty of a brother, being single, to marry the widow of his deceased brother, in order that the inheritance of the dead should not pass to a stranger. A consideration of *Deut.* xxi. 17. will show that these "statutes" were purely of a *remedial* character. We read, "*If* a man have two wives," &c. That is, if a man has departed from the law of God as laid down at the beginning, and taken more than one wife "and one is beloved, and the other hated," (a very natural consequence of the system,) "and they have borne him children, he may *not* make the son of the beloved first-born *before* the son of the hated, which is indeed the first-born. But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath, for he is the beginning of his strength: the *right* of the firstborn is *his*." This was a merciful provision of God against the caprice or injustice of a parent towards a helpless, unoffending son, *without* God intending on his part *any* approbation of the father's conduct in taking two

wives. In the same chapter we read, "*If* a man have a rebellious son," he was to be stoned to death. (Verse 18.) Again, in verse 22, "*If* a man have committed a sin worthy of death," &c. Again, in the book of *Leviticus*, we have many such like *ifs*. Thus, "*If* a man have an ox, or a bull, and he gore a man, and he die," &c.

Now will any Mormon assert that these *ifs* are to be understood in the sense of a command? If he would *not* understand any one of these passages so, how is it that he dares to act so dishonestly, offer an insult to common sense, and violence to Scripture, by telling us that the very same expressions—"If a man have two wives"—must be understood either as a command or approval on the part of God, *contrary* to every other verse in the same chapter? Is it not because his heart is set on lust and sin, and therefore glad to catch at any straw or shadow as a justification for his iniquity? But why reason the matter with such men? If polygamy is forbidden in the following passage, the subject has been fully set at rest for ever by God himself: "*Neither shalt thou take one wife to another, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her lifetime.*" (*Lev. xviii. 18*, marginal reading.) Here, it appears, the favourite doctrine of Mormonism is flatly condemned; and this one text forms a complete weapon wherewith every Christian may successfully prove the falsehood of Mormonism, and defend himself and the law of Christian marriage.

Thirdly—The history of the heathen world is against polygamy. This evidence is derived from two sources—sacred and profane history. One short, but painfully graphic, picture of the sad and degraded state of society, when the reins were given up to unbridled lust, may be seen in *Romans i. 24—29*: they were "filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, and wickedness." Had these people lived in modern times, they would have made most excellent "Latter-day Saints," and would have surely

escaped the "damnation" thundered forth in Joe Smith's "Revelation" *against all the virtuous of the sexes!* The evidence derived from profane history is so copious, that an allusion only can be given to it here. In the heathen world, both in ancient and modern times, where polygamy is practised without let or hindrance, the female portion of mankind are in a state of extreme degradation and slavery to the will, lustful passions, and caprice of the male portion of their fellow-creatures. Look at civilized, but unchristianized, China, and remember the fearful amount of infanticide which takes place annually, as well as a hundred other evils, arising from that baneful system—polygamy. An intelligent Mahomedan, lately on a visit in this country, was asked by an English Christian gentleman his opinion of polygamy. His answer was striking. "Whoever," said he, "has more wives than one, has a perfect hell." Paganism, Mahomedanism, and Mormonism, each in their turn, teach and practice a plurality of wives. Heathenism, without divine revelation, following the inclination of corrupt human nature! Mahomedanism, following the practice of Pagan nations, and the example of their false prophet and his heretical creed! Mormonism, the latter-day delusion, while it professes reverence for the Word of God, basely wrests the Scriptures in support of its doctrines, and revels in all the uncleanness and lust of heathenism; trampling under its unhallowed feet the Divine law of marriage—"they *two* shall be one flesh"—thus rending asunder all social happiness and domestic peace.

Fourthly and lastly—The sad state of Mormon society is a strong proof that polygamy is a *curse* instead of a blessing to a people. This evidence is most remarkably furnished *by Mormonites themselves!* The *Swansea Herald*, not long since, published a letter just received from a Welsh miner, who embarked in 1850, with his wife and family, to join the Mormons in America. It is dated

St. Louis, Dec. 7th. The deluded victim says:—" Myself, together with my wife and child, have been ill here for five months, and now I am somewhat better, but I have lost all my comforts, for I have buried both wife and child in the same grave, at Illinois. I am now living at Missouri. It is very unhealthy here, and *I beg of you to use all your influence to persuade my friends to stay where they are, rather than suffer themselves to be blindfolded into such a system of roguery and plunder as Mormonism. It is nothing but a mere humbug. I have found it so to my heart's sorrow. It would be better for us not to be born, than to have come here to be Mormons.* They will take all from you at home, and starve you when you come here, if they have the chance, and *take your wives from you.* Their chief has *twenty-four wives*, and those lower in office than he have a smaller number, in proportion to their office, according to their station. Some have *fourteen*, some *seven*, and others different numbers.* And now they are trying their best to insult the officers of the United States, who have left their places, and have gone to Washington; and, as Congress is now sitting, we shall hear what they will do. The Mormons are very unkind one to another. I had to dig my wife's grave myself. She had a decent burial, but the Mormons did not put their hands to help at all. The men who gave them so much money, had promises of land, and everything else, when they reach here; but they have been left to die in the workhouse. I wish to tell you, also, that the Sabbath is no more regarded here than any other day. There is gaming of every description here on the Sabbath, such as

* "The report of the judges of the Utah territory, since then, state that the prominent men in the Mormon church have as many as twenty or thirty wives!" and "the *New York National Police Gazette* contains a mass of disgusting details relative to the proceedings of this sect at the Salt Lake. A correspondent of that paper, writing from Utah says 'the pluralist wife system is in full vogue here; Governor Young is said to have *ninety wives!*'"

horse racing, rolling the ten pins, playing at cards, &c. ; and the leaders of the Mormons indulge in these to a great extent, together with dancing, *swearing*, and *everything else that is beyond decency.*"

Now an extract from a letter of a calico printer in America to his parents in Clithero, Lancashire. He writes thus:—"Should John Thornber come to this country [America] to join the Mormonites, he must bear in mind that they have all things common, *even their wives*, and I should think it would take *three or four weeks to go all round before he can have her again!*" Such is Mormonism at the present time! And if facts are more "stubborn" than statements and theories, it will not fail to show how far "The Prophet of the Nineteenth Century" is entitled to confidence, and his sect to the appellation of "Latter-day Saints."

Here, then, is palpable, unmistakable evidence that Mormonism is *truly a curse, a delusion, and a demoralizing pestilence.* And yet, notwithstanding all this, and other evidence, a thousand times repeated and as glaring, hundreds in this boasted age of enlightenment and the march of intellect, willingly embrace the delusion, *greedily* swallowing the lie of this soul-destroying error, and, like Israel of old, "will not hear the law of the Lord," but love those lying prophets which speak unto them "smooth things, which prophecy deceits." (*Isaiah xxx. 9, 10.*)

In conclusion, Fathers and Mothers of England, will you suffer your dear children to grow up around you in irreligion and sin, in the midst of so many opportunities and means of obtaining for them a sound religious education? Will you go on in an evil way, sitting in darkness amidst so much light, and allow yourselves, your wives, and your daughters, to become the dupes of the wicked? Shall their tender bosoms become the nestling place of every unclean and hateful lust? Will you willingly become the slaves of corrupt and corrupting men,

who the Scriptures declare should arise in these last days, "having eyes full of adultery, beguiling unstable souls, that cannot cease from sin," and that, "while they promise you liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." (2 *Peter* ii. 18, 19; 2 *Timothy* iii.; *Jude*. Remember that, though many amongst us neglect vital godliness, and make no profession of religion, yet the females of England, and of Christendom without exception, are indebted to Christianity for the high position they now occupy in society and the social circle.

Christianity has raised you, females, to an *equality* with man. Heathenism, Mahomedanism, and Mormonism, would reduce you to the level of the brute, make you slaves of licentious men, and thus trample your virtues, your liberties, your happiness, influence, and peace, under their feet for ever! And, mark! this is not all. If these *defilers of the flesh* have made ever so many once-virtuous females slaves to their base passions, and "if one, or either of them, shall be with another man, she shall be destroyed." (See Joe Smith's "Revelation," p. 8; *Star*, Jan. 1st, 1853, No. 1, vol. xxv.) Here, then, the poor female victim of Mormon lust is to be MURDERED! if, after having been drawn into the vortex of sin, *she* should draw others into the circle of iniquity *with her*! Females, Mothers, and Daughters of England! remember this, and flee Mormonism, as you would a pestilence!

"O MY SOUL, COME NOT THOU INTO THEIR SECRET: UNTO THEIR ASSEMBLY, MINE HONOUR, BE NOT THOU UNITED!"

THE END.